



# Focus on Food Safety

## Two-Stage Cooling

Cooked, potentially hazardous foods need to move quickly through the temperature danger zone to limit growth of micro-organisms, resulting in foodborne illness. A two-stage cooling process is required:



1. From 140°F to 70°F within two hours; and
2. From 70°F to 41°F within four hours

or

Within four hours if food is prepared using ingredients normally stored at room temperature

***Many foods require manipulation to cool quickly. Possible methods include:***

- Placing food in shallow pans
- Separating food into smaller or thinner portions (2 inch depth for thick foods/4" depth for thin liquids)
- Cutting large pieces of meat into pieces no larger than 4 inches or 4 pounds
- Stirring the food as it cools
- Using an ice paddle or other equipment to stir the food
- Adding ice directly to the product as an ingredient
- Using rapid chill refrigeration equipment
- Placing food in containers that encourage quick cooling, or
- Placing food in an ice bath

***To cool in an ice bath, follow these steps:***

1. Prepare an ice bath in a clean sink. Fill the sink with ice. Add cold water to fill in the spaces
2. Remove food from heat source. Insert the container into the ice bath so the food is level with the ice
3. Stir the food every 10-15 minutes
4. Drain water and replenish ice as it melts
5. Use a clean thermometer to monitor the temperature of the food
6. After the food has cooled to 41°F, refrigerate or freeze.

